

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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P R 281445Z MAY 74

FM AMMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7499

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 1060

.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FI

SUBJECT: RIGHT-WING CONSTITUTIONALIST PARTY HOLDS

ITS FIRST PARTY CONGRESS

SUMMARY: THE NEW RIGHT-WING CONSTITUTIONALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY (SPK) HELD ITS FIRST CONGRESS ON MAY 25, ELECTING MP GEORG C. EHRNROOTH AS ITS CHAIRMAN. "THE FATHERLAND IS IN DANGER" BECAME THE SLOGAN OF THE CONGRESS. AMID PATRIOTIC SONGS AND MARCHES, SPEECHES RANG OUT WITH CONDEMNATIONS OF THE COMMUNISTS, NON-SOCIALISTS, AND THE COUNTRY'S LEADERS. THE SPK IS A VERY SMALL PARTY AND IS LIKELY TO REMAIN SO, BUT OBVIOUSLY FILLS A NEED FOR A SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION. ITS CHANCES OF GAINING MORE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT DEPENDS LARGELY ON POSSIBLE FURTHER DEFECTIONS FROM THE CONSERVATIVE AND SWEDISH PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MAY 25 THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED RIGHT-WING CONSTITUTIONALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY (SPK) HELD ITS FIRST PARTY CONGRESS, AMID PATRIOTIC SONGS, MARCHES, AND SPEECHES. ABOUT 300 PARTY MEMBERS ATTENDED THE  
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CONGRESS. ALTHOUGH THE SPK CLAIMS TO HAVE 60

DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONS , ONLY ABOUT 50 OF THESE WERE OFFICIALLY REPRESENTED, THE REMAINING BEING STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF REGISTRATION DRIVES.

2. THE CONGRESS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED MP GEORGE C. EHRNROOTH AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY, SIMO VALOMA OF TAMPERE AND ASKO HEISKANEN OF NURMIJARVI AS VICE CHAIRMEN, AND KARI RAISANEN OF HELSINKI AS SECRETARY. IN ADDITION A 40- MEMBER PARTY COUNCIL WAS ELECTED ON THE BASIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE ELECTION COMMITTEE.

3. THE SPK'S OTHR MP, MRS. SALME KATAJAVUORI, DID NOT STAND FOR ELECTION TO OFFICE, SAYING THAT SHE WANTED TO CONCENTRATE ON SETTING UP THE SPK'S WOMENS' ORGANIZATION.

4. TRUE TO FORM, EHRNROOTH IN HIS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH ATTACKED NOT ONLY THE COMMUNISTS, BUT ALSO THE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES IN GENERAL FOR BEING TOO SOFT ON THE LEFT (WHILE IN THE SAME BREATH OFFERING COOPERATION WITH THEM). IN ANOTHER FAMILIAR VEIN HE CASTIGATED FINLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY MAKERS FOR THEIR "BUSY-BODY" NEUTRALITY AND FOR ENTERTAINING UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CSCE. THE PREVIOUS TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY, ILPO JARVINEN, ECHOED THE OFT REPEATED SLOGAN, "THE FATHERLAND IS IN DANGER". JARVINEN ALSO POINTED OUT THAT "SYSTEMATIC CONDEMNATION OF THE UNITED STATES" IS NOT ACCEPTABLE WITHIN THE TERMS OF NEUTRALITY.

5. REPORTEDLY THE MEMBERS ATTENDING THE CONGRESS WERE ABOUT EVENLY SPLIT BETWEEN FINNS AND SWEDO-FINNS. DESPITE THE RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF MEMBRs, FIVE THOUSAND PLUS, THE SPK LEADERSHIP IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ITS FUTURE, CLAIMING THAT IT WILL GET 5-15 SEATS IN PARLIAMENT AT THE NEXT ELECTIONS (WHICH THE SPK EXPECTS TO TAKE PLACE STILL THIS YEAR).

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COMMENT: GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE SPK ONLY POLLED 9.1 PERCENT OF TH VOTE IN THE MOST RECNT GALLUP POLL, IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER IT WILL BE ABLE TO IMPROVE MUCH ON ITS PRESENT 2 SEATS IN PARLIAMENT, EXCPT THROUGH FURTHER DEFECTIONS FROM THE CONSERVATIVE OR SWEDISH PARTIES. EHRNROOTH AND KATAJAVUORI BOTH HAVE LARGE PERSONAL FOLLOWINGS IN THEIR

ELECTION DISTRICT, HLSINKI, AND CAN BE COUNTED ON TO BE RE-ELECTED. THEIR APPEAL IS NOT LIKELY TO SUFFICE IN CARRYING OTHERS ON THEIR COAT-AND-SKIRT-TAILS. UNTIL RECENTLY THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHAT THE REST OF THE MORE CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF THE SWEDISH PARTY(SFP) WOULD DO, BUT EARLIER THIS MONTH THEY FORMED A NEW FACTION AND DECIDED TO STAY WITH THE SFP. WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONALIST PARTY WAS FIRST FORMED, THERE WAS SPECULATION THAT POSSIBLY UP TO EIGHT OF THE "ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE" MINORITY OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY WOULD BOLT TO THE SPK. SO FAR, DESPITE CONTINUING ACrimonious INFIGHTING IN THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, ONLY KATAJAVUORI HAS TAKEN THAT STEP. OTHER WELL KNOWN FIGURES SUCH AS TUURE JUNNILA AND RIMO ILASKIVI, WHO BOTH HAVE ENOUGH PERSONAL APPEAL TO BE ELECTED UNDER ANY PARTY BANNER, HAVE DECIDED TO STICK IT OUT WITH THE CONSERVATIVES--UNTIL AND UNLESS THEY ARE KICKED OUT, WHICH COULD HAPPEN. WHATEVER THE SPK'S FUTURE MAY TURN OUT TO BE, IT IS CLEAR THAT IT WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN FORMED HAD THERE NOT BEEN A NEED FOR IT AMONG A LARGE ENOUGH SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION, A SEGMENT WHICH COULD NOT COUNTENANCE THE LEFT-WARD DRIFT OF BOTH THE CONSERVATIVE AND SWEDISH PARTIES. NEVERTHELESS, JUSTIFIED AS THE FORMATION OF TH SPK MAY HAVE BEEN, THE FACT REMAINS THAT IT TENDS TO FURTHER SPLINTER THE ALREADY BADLY FACTIONALIZED NON-SOCIALIST CAMP AND THEREBY ACTUALLY MAY BE PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF THE LEFTIST PARTIES.

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